

REMARKS:

The above amendments and these remarks are responsive to the Office action dated July 11, 2006. Prior to entry of this response, claims 1-26 were pending in the application. In the Office action, 1) claims 11, 17, and 19 are rejected because of informalities; 2) claims 4-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112 as failing to comply with the written description requirement; 3) claims 1, 2, 4-6, 8 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Seto et al. in view of Lee et al.; 4) claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Seto et al. in view of Lee et al. as applied to claim 4 and in further view of Hotsumi; 5) claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Seto et al. in view of Lee et al. as applied to claim 4 and in further view of Dean; 6) claims 1-6, 8-10, 17, 19, and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Heintz et al. in view of Seto et al.; 7) claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Heintz et al. in view of Seto et al. as applied to claim 4, and further in view of Hotsumi; 8) claim 18 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Heintz et al. in view of Seto et al. as applied to claim 17, and further in view of Lee et al.; 9) claims 11, 12, 14-16, and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Heintz et al. in view of Seto et al. and Lee et al.; 10) claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Heintz et al. in view of Seto et al. and Lee et al. as applied to claim 13, and further in view of Hotsumi; and 11) claims 22, 23, and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Heintz et al. in view of Seto et al. and Kyhl et al.

In view of the amendments above, and the remarks below, applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application and allowance of the pending claims.

Rejections under 35 USC § 112

Claims 11, 17, and 19 are amended to correct a typographical error and objection to these claims should be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 USC § 112

Claims 4, 11, and 17 are amended so that the language of these claims more closely resembles the language of claim 1, which has been approved by the Examiner (See Page 7, lines 16-19, of the July 11, 2006 Office Action). Accordingly, the § 112 rejection of claims 4, 11, and 17, and all claims depending from these claims, should be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 USC § 103

Independent claims 1, 4, 11, 17, and 22 are each rejected under 35 USC § 103 based on Seto et al. in combination with one or more of Heintz et al., Lee et al., and Kyhl et al. Each of these claims is amended to recite a latch (or retaining element) that is spring biased to maintain an access door (or access feature) in a closed position. Neither Seto et al., Heintz et al., Lee et al., nor Kyhl et al. disclose this feature. Accordingly, the § 103 rejection of claims 1, 4, 11, 17, and 22, and all claims depending from these claims, should be withdrawn.

Please note that the above described amendment should be entered and does not require additional searching because original claims 7 and 13 recited a biasing element. Claims 7 and 13 are hereby cancelled in light of the amendments to the independent claims from which they depend.

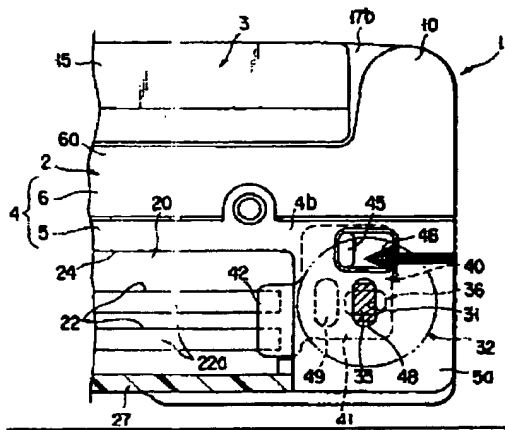
It is noted that with respect to now cancelled claims 7 and 13, Hotsumi is cited as disclosing a biasing element. However, Hotsumi does not disclose "a latch spring biased to engage the access door and maintain the access door in the closed position." In fact, Hotsumi does not disclose an access door whatsoever, nor any latch for maintaining an access door in a closed position. To the contrary, Hotsumi discloses a mounting mechanism for a car stereo. A spring biased car stereo mounting assembly is not the same as an access door that is held shut by a spring-biased latch. Accordingly, Hotsumi does not cure the deficiencies of the other references because each and every element of the pending claims is not disclosed by any combination of Hotsumi and the other references.

All pending claims are believed to be allowable based on the present amendments that require the latch to be spring biased because none of the cited

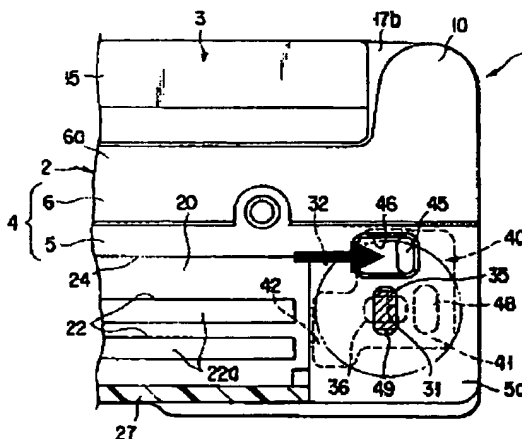
references teach or suggest a spring biased latch that maintains an access door in a closed position. Furthermore, the following arguments detail additional reasons why the claims should be allowed.

Rejection of claims 1, 2, 4-6, 8, and 9 based on Seto et al. and Lee et al. should be withdrawn because the proposed modification of Seto et al. renders that reference unsatisfactory for its intended purpose.

Page 3 of the Official action states that "it would have been obvious to modify the apparatus of Seto such that the latch portion 42 is engageable with the access door 27 in its closed position." Applicants respectfully disagree. Seto et al. teaches a locking mechanism with two distinct operating positions, which are shown in Figs. 3 and 4.



Seto, Fig. 3 – Lever 45 pushed to left-side, latch 42 follows to left-side.



Seto, Fig. 4 – Lever 45 pushed to right-side, latch 42 follows to right-side.

As shown in Fig. 3, when lever 45 is slid to the left, latch 42 blocks the removal of PC cards 22. As shown in Fig. 4, when lever 45 is slid to the right, latch 42 does not block the removal of the PC cards. In both configurations, a lock can be inserted into lock hole 31, thus allowing the laptop to be locked to another object using a security cable. As demonstrated by the ABSTRACT, an intended purpose of Seto et al. is to be able to lock the laptop while being able to choose whether PC card removal is blocked (the PC cards are broadly referred to as a "functional component").

[57]

ABSTRACT

An electronic apparatus has a housing with a peripheral wall. The peripheral wall has a lock hole in which a lock device is detachably engaged. A receptacle is formed in the housing. The receptacle has an insertion hole formed in the peripheral wall of the housing. The receptacle removably receives a functional component through the insertion hole. A lock member is disposed within the housing. The lock member is movable between a locked position where the lock member is advanced to the receptacle and irremovably locks the functional component in the receptacle and a lock release position where the lock member retreats from the receptacle and unlocks the functional component. The lock member has a first engaging hole which is continuous with the lock hole when the lock member is moved to the locked position and a second engaging hole which is continuous with the lock hole when the lock member is moved to the lock release position. The lock device is detachably engaged in one of the first and second engaging holes through the lock hole.

In other words, according to Seto et al., a user must have the option of inserting and removing PC cards while the laptop is locked. If Seto et al. were modified as suggested in the Office action, it would be impossible for PC Cards to be inserted and/or removed while the laptop was locked because the access door would be locked in the closed position, thus completely blocking access to the PC cards. Therefore, modifying Seto et al. to operate more similarly to the currently claimed invention would render Seto et al. unsatisfactory for at least one of its intended purposes. A proposed modification cannot render the prior art unsatisfactory for its intended purpose. MPEP 2143.01. Accordingly, Seto et al. cannot be modified as suggested in the October 28, 2005, Office action, and rejection of claims 1, 2, 4-6, 8, and 9 should be withdrawn for at least this additional reason.

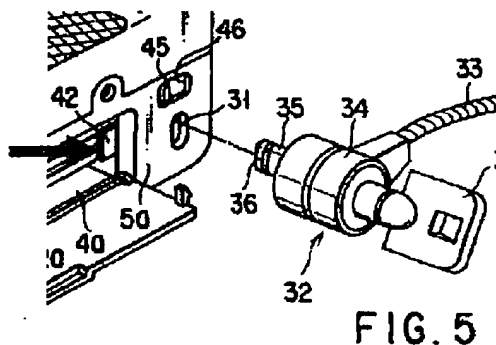
Furthermore, with respect to the currently submitted amendments, it is noted that adding a spring to the latch of Seto et al. would further render that reference unsatisfactory for its intended purpose. In particular, if a spring were added to Seto et al., the latch would always be in the closed position that blocks removal of PC cards. Every time a user wanted to remove a PC card, the lock would have to be unlocked, the lever would have to be moved against the biasing of the spring, and the PC card would have to be removed while the lever was held open against the spring biasing, thus

making it difficult to remove PC cards. As discussed above, Seto et al. is focused on making PC card insertion and removal easier, not more difficult. Accordingly, addition of a spring would further render Seto et al. unsatisfactory for its intended purpose.

Furthermore, as acknowledged in the October 28, 2005, Office action, Seto et al. does not by itself teach a latch that engages and maintains an access door in a closed position. Seto et al. instead teaches using the latch itself to block removal of PC cards, not using an access door to block removal of PC cards. The July 7, 2006, Office action states that a modification of Seto et al. provides a latch that engages and maintains an access door in a closed position. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection because the cited references do not provide any guidance as to how the latch of Seto et al. can be used to maintain the door in a closed position.

The July 11, 2006, Office action submits "that the door 27 of Seto may include a tab, similar to the unlabeled tabs at the top two corners of the door as seen in fig. 5, to cooperate with the latch 42 to maintain the door in its closed condition." Applicants respectfully point out that Seto et al. does not provide any indication whatsoever that the "tabs" may be used in this manner, and that the Office action is the only place where such a use for the tabs is taught or suggested. It appears that the Office action is using hindsight to extract a teaching out of Seto et al. that is not at all present within the four corners of that reference.

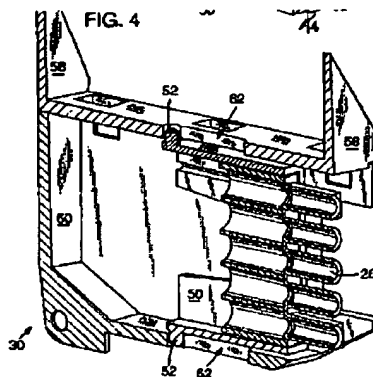
Furthermore, latch 42 is positioned to closely fit against the PC cards so that the removal of the PC cards can be blocked by the latch. Fig. 5 shows that there is no room behind latch 42 that would allow the "tabs" to extend behind the latch and catch onto the latch.



Therefore, even if there was a suggestion or motivation to modify Seto et al. as suggested by the Office action, the proposed modification would not allow tabs to use the latch as a catch, because the latch is positioned immediately adjacent the PC cards without room behind the tab to allow a tab to catch. Accordingly, rejection of claims 1, 2, 4-6, 8, and 9 should be withdrawn for at least this additional reason.

The above arguments also apply to the rejections of claims 3, 10-12, 14-23, and 25 because rejection of each of these claims relies on Seto et al. Furthermore, rejection of each of these claims relies on Heintz et al. It is noted that Heintz et al. does not disclose any slot or opening that is sized and positioned to retain a lock head when the lock head is in a locked orientation, as claimed. In fact, Heintz et al. does not even once mention the concept of locking an access door.

The Office action indicates that a slot 62 of Heintz "is capable" of receiving a removable locking device and lock head. However, the Office action does not indicate that the slot can retain the lock head when it is in the locked position, as claimed. An inspection of Heintz et al. reveals that slot 62 actually is designed to receive a guide post 52 from the inside, and that the positioning of guide post 52 would make it impossible for slot 62 to retain a lock head when the lock head is in a locked orientation.




Therefore, even if Heintz et al. is interpreted so that slot 62 can receive a lock head (a clearly strained interpretation that is unsupported by Heintz et al.), Heintz et al. still does not disclose the claimed limitation that the slot retains the lock head when the lock head is in the locked orientation. Furthermore, if a lock head was somehow able to be positioned in slot 62, then slot 62 could not receive guide post 52 as intended.

Therefore, Heintz et al. cannot cure the above discussed deficiencies of Seto et al. Accordingly, rejection of claims 3, 10-12, 14-23, and 25 should be withdrawn for at least the above described additional reasons.

Applicants believe that this application is now in condition for allowance, in view of the above amendments and remarks. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner issue a Notice of Allowability covering the pending claims. If the Examiner has any questions, or if a telephone interview would in any way advance prosecution of the application, please contact the undersigned attorney of record.

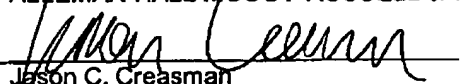
CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being sent to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office via facsimile to (571) 273-8300 on July 31, 2006.


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